

Division for the Visually Impaired
Business Enterprise Program (BEP)
Blind Vendors Committee (BVC) Meeting Minutes
1901 N. DuPont Highway, Biggs Building
New Castle, DE 191720
October 24, 2019
10:00 AM to 12:00 Noon

Attendees: Wayne Marsh, Chairman; Anthony Paolini, Committee Member; Elisha Jenkins, Division for the Visually Impaired; Debra Mills-Joe, Division for the Visually Impaired; Jill Morrison, Division for the Visually Impaired; Andy Kloepfer, Division for the Visually Impaired; Romy Mikhail, Division for the Visually Impaired; Mark Ridenour, Division for the Visually Impaired; Bill DeGraffenreid, Business Enterprise Program.

Wayne Marsh called the meeting to order at 10:03 AM.

Approval of Minutes: Anthony Paolini made motion to approve the July 25, 2019 meeting minutes. Wayne Marsh seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Program Finance: Balances were provided on all accounts. Motion to move excess funds from Account 2 to Account 3 Savings to take advantage of interest account.

Directors Report: The initial Sunset Task Force meeting occurred on August 14, 2019. The recommendations specific to BEP are on the agenda for the third meeting scheduled for September 24, 2019 @ 10:00 am. Wayne Marsh will notify all Blind Vendors.

- **Independent Living Services-** The Division is collaborating with the following non-profit organizations:

The Jewish Community Center would like to develop a water safety course for visually impaired individuals to provide survival skills should they fall into a body of

water. They are interested in hosting a presentation by the Division staff for their senior staff members to increase awareness of the services offered by the Division. The Delaware Art Museum is also collaborating with DVI to obtain guidance on how to make their exhibits accessible to visitors who are visually impaired.

- **Vocational Rehabilitation-** The Division for the Visually Impaired supported five high school students to attend Level Up: Connect, Engage, Act on the campus of Wichita State University. This weeklong experience for blind and visually impaired students, June 23-28, 2019, focused on enhancing skills that support transition to college or careers. Sessions and workshops include communication skills, building life, study, and soft skills, developing leadership skills, STEAM and Physical Education, business etiquette, interview skills, and effective job search. The students also participated in a college and career fair and received a laptop to bridge the digital divide as they transition to education or employment. This is the second year the Division has sent students to Level Up.

Budget: The Division is engaged in the budget process for the state fiscal year 2021. The focus this year is to acquire resources for the Vocational Rehabilitation Program.

Upward Mobility Training: The Upward Mobility training held on August 6-8 went well. There was a suggestion that the next training be held at the same venue with more items on the agenda.

Mini BLAST: The National Association of Blind Merchants Mini BLAST conference is September 25-27, 2019, NJ. The agenda is forthcoming.

Healthy Vending Sales Analysis: The July analysis report showed a reduction in sales by 13%. From July 2018 to July 2019, there was a drop in sales by 10% on the Herman Holloway Campus. A meeting between BEP and Canteen will be held earlier than planned in October.

Inventory Update: Talks regarding the kitchen equipment from Delaware Technical and Community College and the Smyrna Rest Area merchandise will resume at the next meeting.

Public Comment: None

Next Meeting: September 26, 2019

Adjournment: Anthony Paolini made motion to adjourn. Wayne Marsh seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 11:10 AM.

Respectfully submitted by:

Debra Mills-Joe

Administrative Specialist I, Division for the Visually Impaired